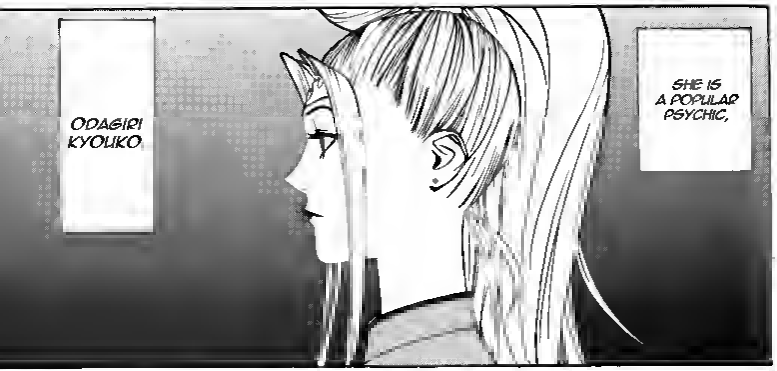
Chapter 2
Silent message



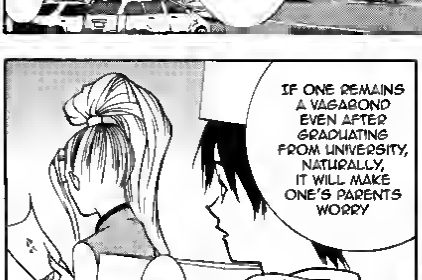
HOWEVER THIS DECISION
I ENDED UP GETTING THE POSITION OF KYOUKO-SAN'S MANAGER
EARLIER, I MISSED MY JOB INTERVIEW DUE TO A CERTAIN ACCIDENT AND, AS A RESULT,
HOBBLE
HOBBLE

Chapter 2
Silent message
...IS A TOTAL SLAVE DRIVER AS ROUGH AS THEY GET!

WHEN SHE SAID I WOULD BE A MANAGER, I WONDERED WHAT KIND OF WORK I WOULD DO
MMMM
TURNS OUT MY WORK CONSISTS OF THINGS LIKE TAGGING ALONG WITH KYOUKO-SAN, WHEN SHE'S SHOPPING AND HAULING HER THINGS AROUND ALL DAY LONG
They all Ferraris.
AND THEN POLISHED HER CARS
Her yard is wider than the Tokyo Dome.
AND YESTERDAY I PULLED THE WEEDS IN THE YARD OF HER HOLIDAY HOUSE ALL DAY
OH?
NEWBIES THESE DAYS LIKE TO PLAY INDEPENDENT ONLY WHEN THEY'RE COMPLAINING. FORGETTING THAT IN REALITY THEY'RE JUST LOWLY-GRADE REPLACEBLE EMPLOYEES.
EEEEEH?! YOU STILL PLAN TO CONTINUE SHOPPING?!
Aaaah?!
ALRIGHTY! NEXT, WE'RE GONNA HIT GINZA JEWELRY SHOPS!
TWO WEEKS IS A RECORD FOR KYOUKO-SAN'S ATTENDANTS TO LAST THIS LONG WHEN SHE BULLIES THEM THIS HARD.
YOU REALLY HAVE IT ROUGH THIS GOES ON FOR TWO WEEKS ALREADY
REALLY.
I WILL GO TO JEWELRY SHOPS WITH YOU.
I WILL DO IT, HAPPY NOW?
WANNA QUIT? FINE BY ME.
BUT BE PREPARED THAT THE INSTANCE YOU DO, YOU'LL TURN INTO A CRIMINAL.

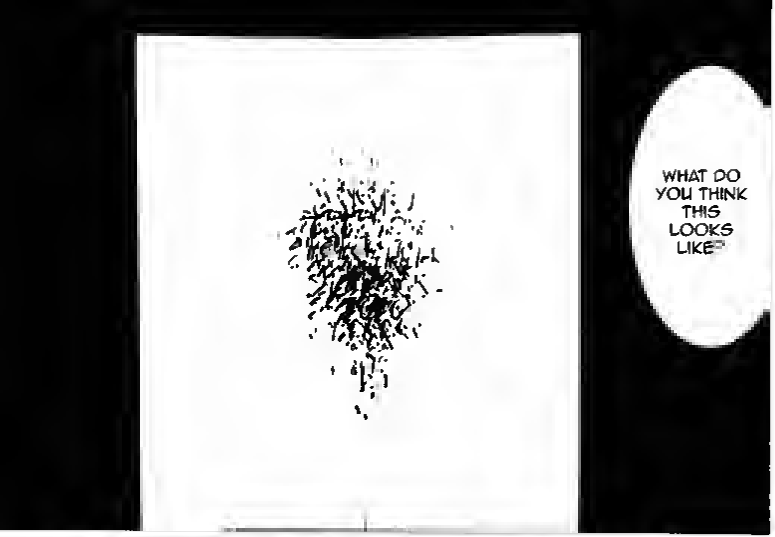
NO, IT DOES NOT.
DOES THIS MEAN YOU'RE A HARDCORE MASOCHIST?

I SEE
I WANT TO REASSURE THEM, THAT'S WHY I DECIDED TO FIND A JOB.
IT'S JUST... YOU KNOW, WHEN I BECAME A SHUT-IN, I CAUSED MY PARENTS A LOT OF TROUBLE.


HM?
IF ONE REMAINS A VAGABOND EVEN AFTER GRADUATING FROM UNIVERSITY, NATURALLY, IT WILL MAKE ONE'S PARENTS WORRY

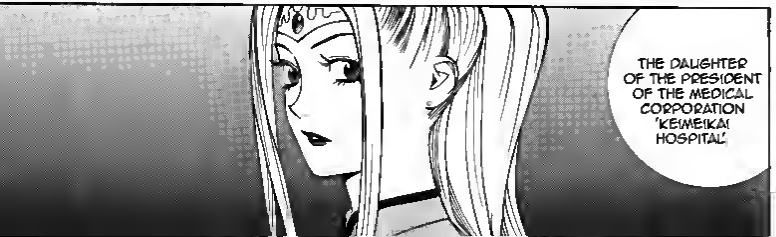
?
OF COURSE ISN'T IT OBVI-OUS?
SO YOUR GETTING A JOB MAKES YOUR PARENTS HAPPY, YOU THINK?

AH, THIS?
KYOUKO-SAN, YOU HAVE BEEN STARING AT THIS SHEET OF PAPER FOR A WHILE, WHY?

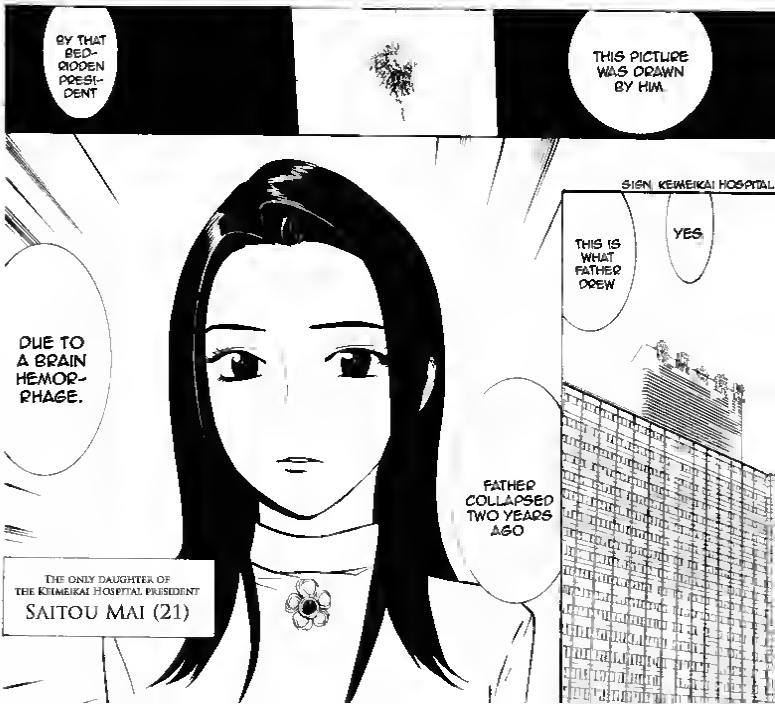

WHAT DO YOU THINK THIS LOOKS LIKE?

YOU THINK?
Where's everything you learned, huh?
IF WE ASSUME IT'S A DRAWING THEN WHAT DOES IT DEPICT? A FURBALL? ANTS GATHERING BAITED BY SOMETHING?
HM? HM? WHAT COULD THIS BE? A DRAWING MAYBE?

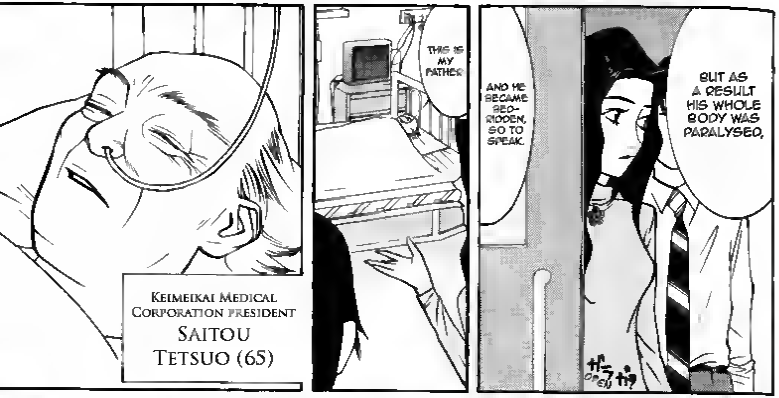
A PERSON?
WHO?
A PERSON CAME TO ME ASKING ABOUT THE MEANING OF THIS DRAWING
NO, IT DOESN'T! ABSOLU-TELY DOESN'T! NOT ONE BIT!!!
IT LOOKS LIKE A [redacted] (self-censored)
LET'S SEE
AND WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TO YOU, KYOUKO-SAN?

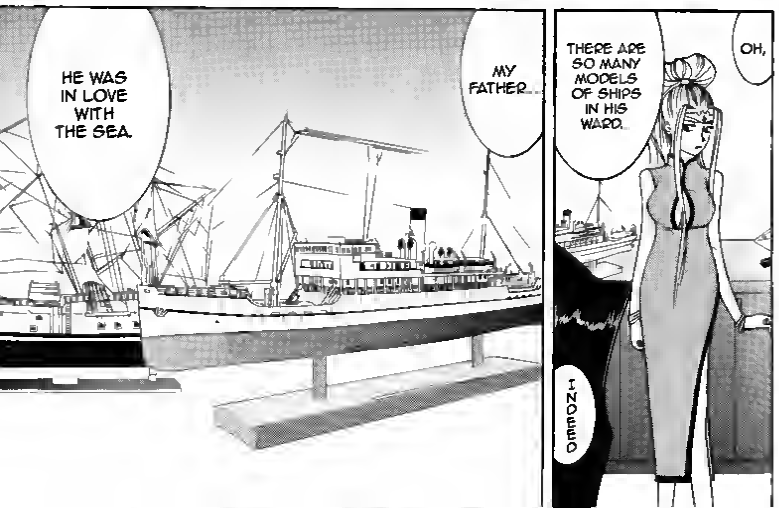

THE DAUGHTER OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE MEDICAL CORPORATION 'KEIMEIKAI HOSPITAL'

YOU KNOW THAT HE'S BEEN BEDRIDDEN FOR SEVERAL YEARS?
YES, I HEARD SOMETHING ABOUT IT.
YEAH, AND I'M TALKING ABOUT THE ONLY DAUGHTER OF THE PRESIDENT OF THIS COPPORATION.
KEIMEIKAI HOSPITAL?! BUT IT'S THE BIGGEST MEDICAL CORPORATION IN JAPAN!!!

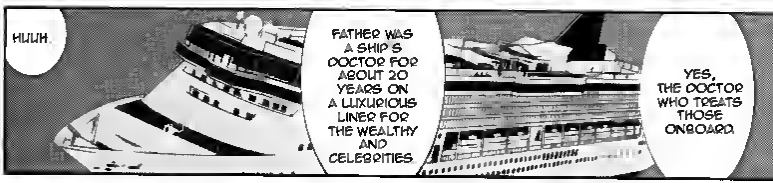

BY THAT BEDRIDDEN PRESIDENT
THIS PICTURE WAS DRAWN BY HIM
SIGN. KEIMEIKAI HOSPITAL
YES
THIS IS WHAT FATHER DREW
DUE TO A BRAIN HEMORRHAGE.
FATHER COLLAPSED TWO YEARS AGO
THE ONLY DAUGHTER OF THE KEIMEIKAI HOSPITAL PRESIDENT
SAITOU MAI (21)

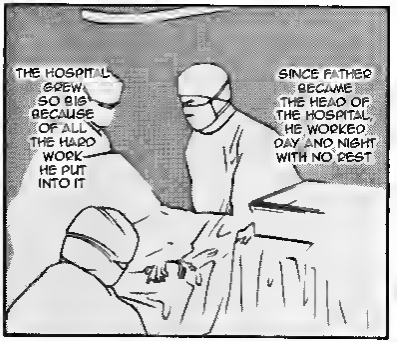
IT WAS A MIRACLE THAT HIS LIFE WAS SAVED WITH A HEMORRHAGE SO SEVERE...
HE HAD HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE PROBLEM SINCE LONG AGO.

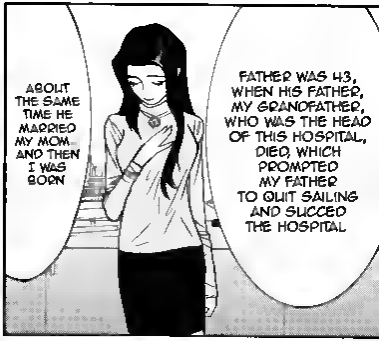

Keimeikai Medical Corporation President
Saitou Tetsuo (65)
THIS IS MY FATHER.
AND HE BECAME BED-RIDDEN, SO TO SPEAK.
BUT AS A RESULT HIS WHOLE BODY WAS PARALYSED.


HE WAS IN LOVE WITH THE SEA.
MY FATHER...
OH,
THERE ARE SO MANY MODELS OF SHIPS IN HIS WARD.
INOBEO

A DOCTOR ON A SHIP?
HEE
BECAUSE OF HIS PASSION FOR THE SEA, HE EVEN WAS A DOCTOR ON A SHIP IN HIS YOUNG DAYS.


HUUH
FATHER WAS A SHIP'S DOCTOR FOR ABOUT 20 YEARS ON A LUXURIOUS LINER FOR THE WEALTHY AND CELEBRITIES
YES, THE DOCTOR WHO TREATS THOSE ONBOARD

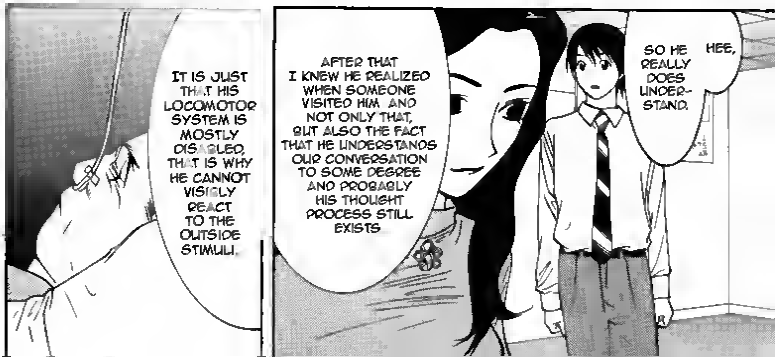

THE HOSPITAL GREW SO BIG BECAUSE OF ALL THE HARD WORK HE PUT INTO IT
SINCE FATHER BECAME THE HEAD OF THE HOSPITAL, HE WORKED DAY AND NIGHT WITH NO REST


ABOUT THE SAME TIME HE MARRIED MY MOM AND THEN I WAS BORN
FATHER WAS 43, WHEN HIS FATHER, MY GRANDFATHER, WHO WAS THE HEAD OF THIS HOSPITAL, DIED, WHICH PROMPTED MY FATHER TO QUIT SAILING AND SUCCED THE HOSPITAL

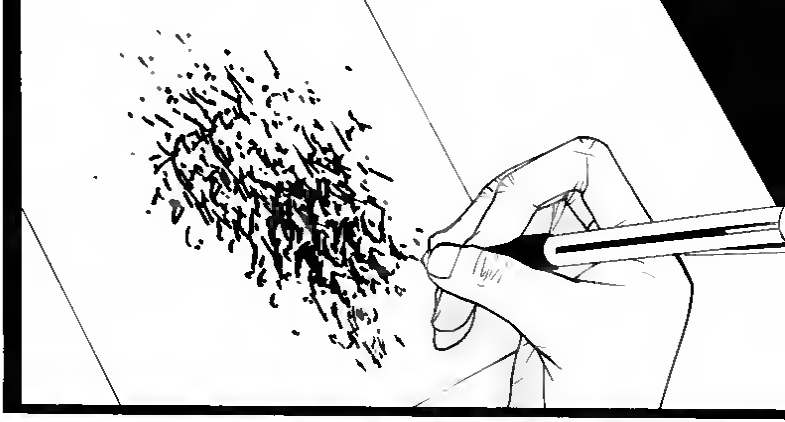
BUT MOTHER PASSED AWAY FIVE YEARS AGO
WHEN MOTHER WAS STILL ALIVE SHE WOULD FIND WAYS TO TAKE CARE OF FATHER'S HEALTH DESPITE HIS WORKING SO MUCH

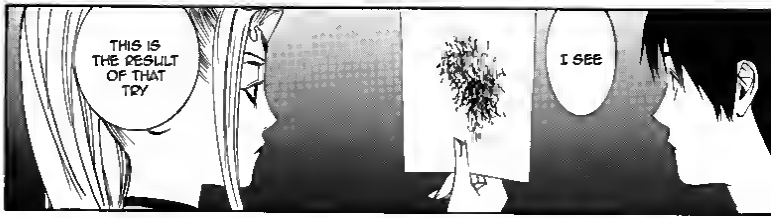
AND SINCE SHE DID HIS HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE GOT OUT OF HAND, WHICH RESULTED IN HIS PRESENT CONDITION...
YOU KNOW, IT'S THE CASE OF A COBBLER WITHOUT SHOES OR A DOCTOR NEGLECTING HIS HEALTH
HE LOOKS LIKE HE'S DEAD...
YOU'RE CLEARLY CARRYING YOUR INSENSITIVITY TOO FAR, KYOUKO-SAN...
IT IS FINE AT FIRST I THOUGHT SO TOO.
SOME DAYS HE JUST SLEEPS LIKE THIS FOR THE MOST OF THE TIME...
OTHER DAYS I HAVE A FEELING THAT HE REGAINS SOME DEGREE OF CONSCIOUSNESS FOR A FEW HOURS
I WONDER IF HE CAN UNDERSTAND OUR CONVERSATION?
AT FIRST I THOUGHT THERE WAS NO WAY HE COULD IN HIS CONDITION
BUT THEN SOMETHING HAPPENED.
THE WEATHER IS NICE TODAY AGAIN, FATHER.
DID YOU SLEEP WELL?

THAT FATHER UNDERSTANDS WHAT I'M SAYING?
COULD IT BE...
IF YOU DO UNDERSTAND, THEN MOVE YOUR FINGER ONCE AGAIN, PLEASE.
TWITCH
!!
TWITCH

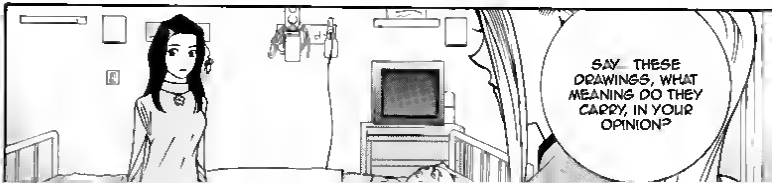

IT IS JUST THAT HIS LOCOMOTOR SYSTEM IS MOSTLY DISABLED, THAT IS WHY HE CANNOT VISIBLY REACT TO THE OUTSIDE STIMULI.
AFTER THAT I KNEW HE REALIZED WHEN SOMEONE VISITED HIM AND NOT ONLY THAT, BUT ALSO THE FACT THAT HE UNDERSTANDS OUR CONVERSATION TO SOME DEGREE AND PROBABLY HIS THOUGHT PROCESS STILL EXISTS
HEE, SO HE REALLY DOES UNDERSTAND.

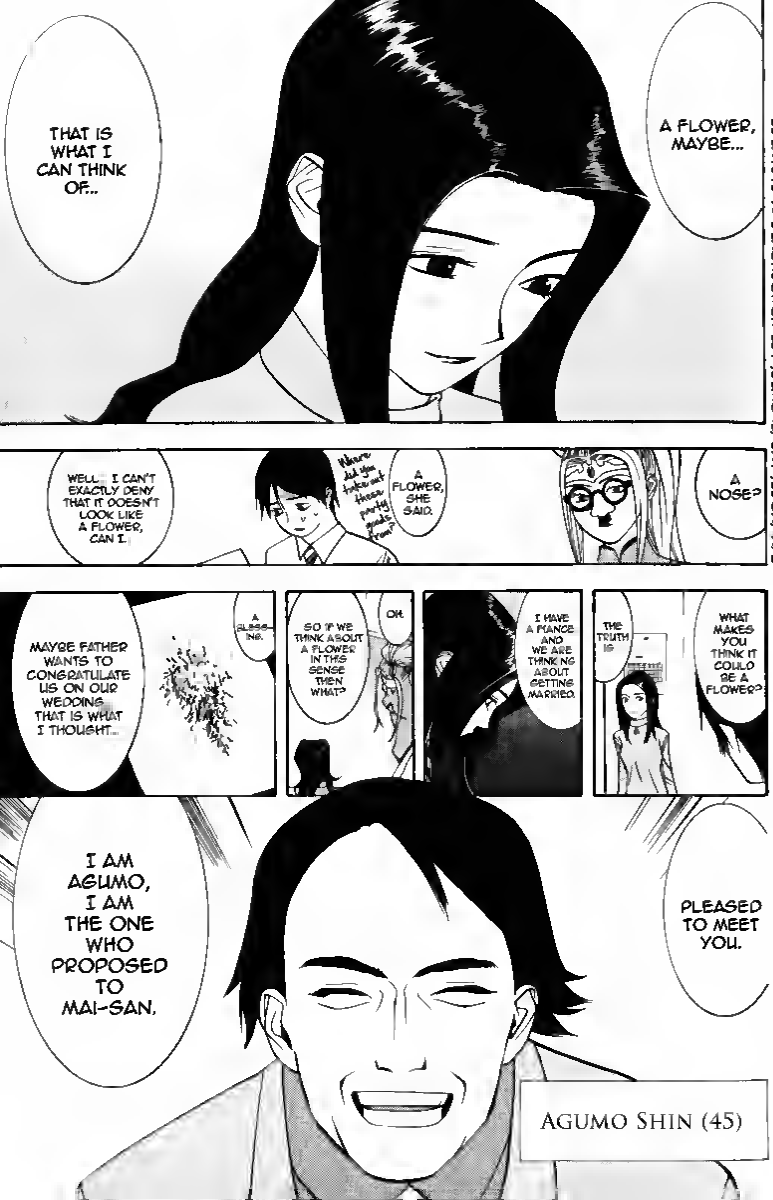
IS MOVING THE FINGERTIPS OF HIS RIGHT HAND, WHICH STILL HAS SOME VERY LIMITED ACILITY TO MOVE.
FOR HIM, THE ONLY WAY TO DISPLAY A REACTION
WAIT A SECOND.
RUN
FATHER WANTS TO TELL ME SOME-THING?
MAYBE IT IS BE-CAUSE
!!
ON THAT DAY FATHER'S FINGERTIPS TWITCHED RESTLESSLY
TWITCH
IF THERE IS SOMETHING YOU WANT TO TELL ME, TRY TO WRITE IT.
HERE, PAPER AND A PEN.
TAP
TAP




THIS IS THE RESULT OF THAT TRY
I SEE

ALL OF THEM LOOK LIKE SWARMING ANTS TO ME...
WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TO YOU?
DO YOU WANT TO TAKE A LOOK?
I HAVE SEVERAL MORE

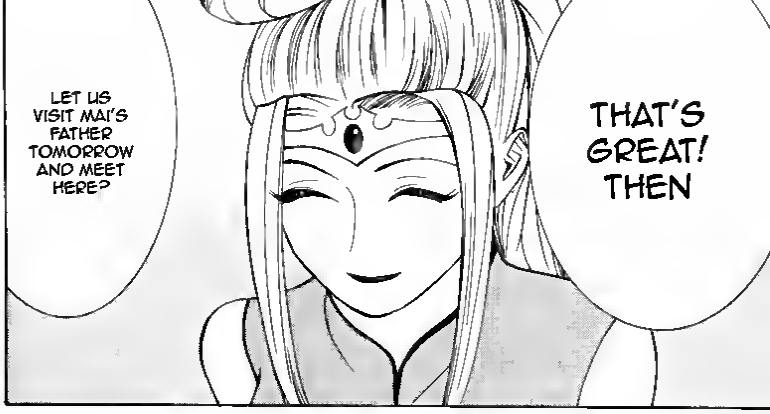

SAY... THESE DRAWINGS, WHAT MEANING DO THEY CARRY, IN YOUR OPINION?


A FLOWER, MAYBE...
THAT IS WHAT I CAN THINK OF...
A NOSE?
A FLOWER, SHE SAID.
Where did you take off those pretty girls' heads from?
WELL... I CAN'T EXACTLY DENY THAT IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE A FLOWER, CAN I.
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK IT COULD BE A FLOWER?
THE TRUTH IS...
I HAVE A FIANCÉ AND WE ARE THINKING ABOUT GETTING MARRIED.
OH.
SO IF WE THINK ABOUT A FLOWER IN THIS SENSE THEN WHAT?
A GLASSES.
MAYBE FATHER WANTS TO CONGRATULATE US ON OUR WEDDING. THAT IS WHAT I THOUGHT...
PLEASED TO MEET YOU.
I AM AGUMO, I AM THE ONE WHO PROPOSED TO MAI-SAN.
AGUMO SHIN (45)

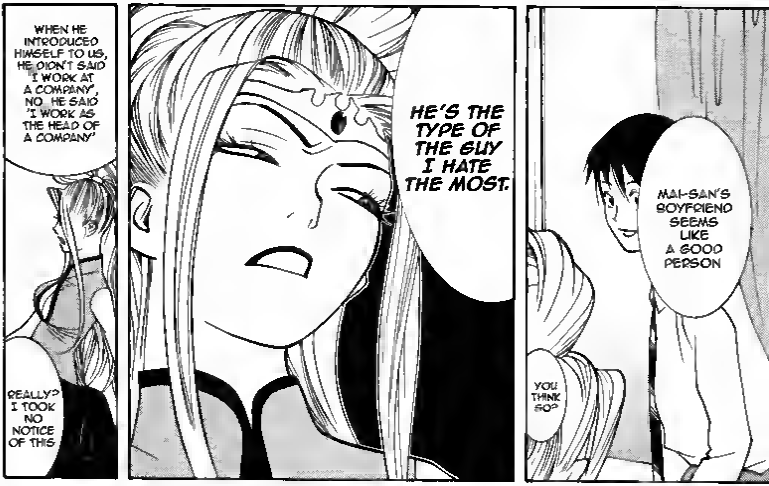
T/N 'NOSE' AND 'FLOWER' ARE HOMOPHONES IN JAPANESE, BOTH SOUND LIKE 'HANA'

YES, I AM 45.
YOU SEEM TO BE QUITE A LOT OLDER THAN YOUR FIANCEE
THANK YOU
I AM HONORED! I AM A BIG FAN OF KYOUKO-SAN!
PRESENTLY I WORK AS THE HEAD OF A COMMUNICATIONS COMPANY
安藤眞
ANDO SHIN
REAL-LY
ACTUALLY I AM READY TO REGISTER OUR MARRIAGE RIGHT AWAY
OF COUR-SE
YOU WANT TO MARRY HER?
I STARTED DATING HIM RIGHT AFTER FATHER COLLAPSED. HE REALLY SAVED ME FROM A DEPRESSION I SUCCUMBED TO
R-I-G-H-T-S
MESSAGES?
FATHER TENDS TO WRITE MORE MESSAGES THAN USUAL AFTER HIS VISITS
HE VISITS FATHER OFTEN
YES, MANY TIMES
HAVE YOU MET HER FATHER BEFORE?
IF WE ONLY KNEW WHAT FATHER THINKS ABOUT OUR MARRIAGE

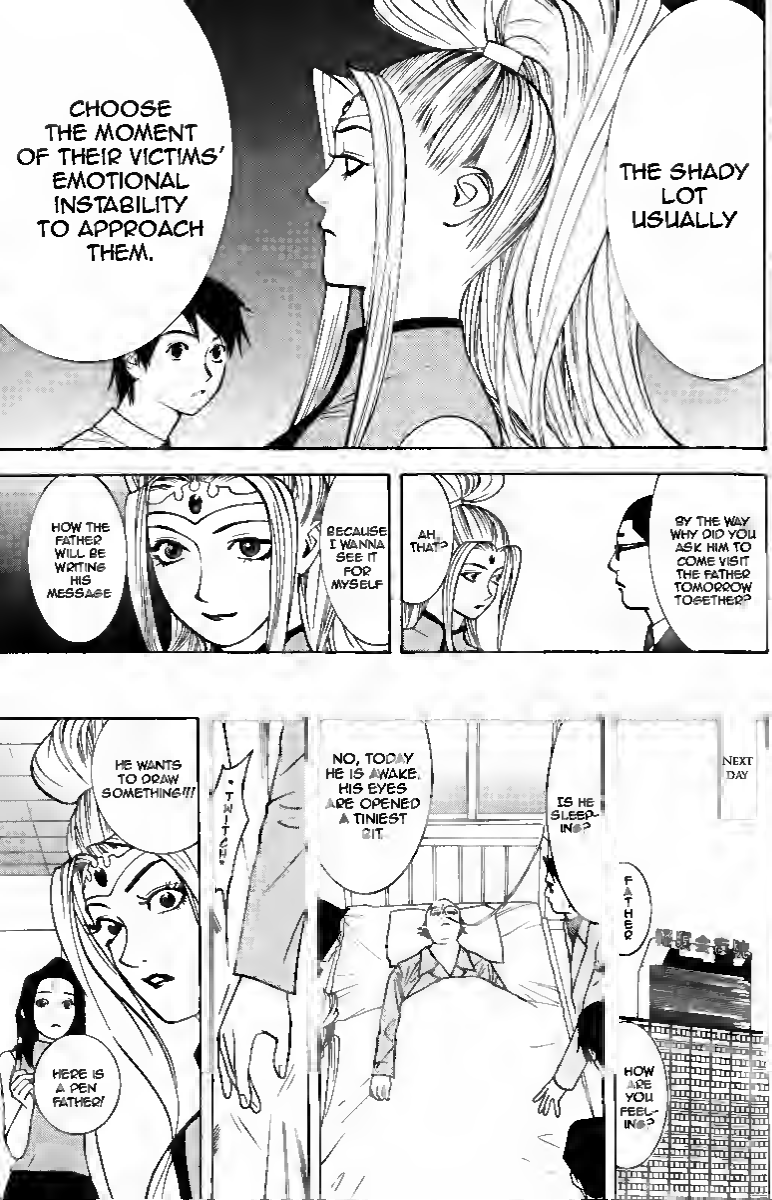
OH? SHE DIDN'T TELL YOU?
HER FATHER LEAVES MESSAGES LIKE THESE.
WOULD BE GREAT IF HE COULD WRITE CHARACTERS, BUT HE CAN'T, SINCE HIS FINGERS ONLY MOVE UP AND DOWN A LITTLE, SO HE TRIES TO SAY SOMETHING BY DRAWING THESE DOTTY PICTURES
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT HE WANTS TO DRAW?
SORRY BUT I HARDLY COULD BE EXPECTED TO KNOW...
SHE THINKS IT'S A FLOWER
AND IT SIGNIFIES HER FATHER'S BLESSING OF YOUR MARRIAGE.
I SEE! IT IS A FLOWER, INDEED!
YOUR FATHER APPROVES OF OUR MARRIAGE!
AH... IT'S ALL GOOD AND ALL, BUT WE HAVE A RESERVATION FOR DINNER AT A RESTAURANT TONIGHT AT 7PM.
EH...? WE HAVE TO GO SOON THEN.
I APOLOGIZE WE COULD NOT TALK MORE.
OH, DO NOT WORRY ABOUT IT. I INCONSIDERATELY DISTURBED YOUR PLANS BY CALLING YOU HERE ALL OF A SUDDEN.
AH DO YOU HAVE SOME TIME TO SPARE TOMORROW?
YES WELL ONLY IN THE MORNING THOUGH


LET US VISIT MAI'S FATHER TOMORROW AND MEET HERE?
THAT'S GREAT! THEN

TOMORROW 10A.M THEN.
ALRIGHT...


WHEN HE INTRODUCED HIMSELF TO US, HE DION'T SAID 'I WORK AT A COMPANY', NO, HE SAID 'I WORK AS THE HEAD OF A COMPANY'
REALLY? I TOOK NO NOTICE OF THIS
HE'S THE TYPE OF THE GUY I HATE THE MOST.
MAI-SAN'S BOYFRIEND SEEMS LIKE A GOOD PERSON
YOU THINK SO?

BESIDES

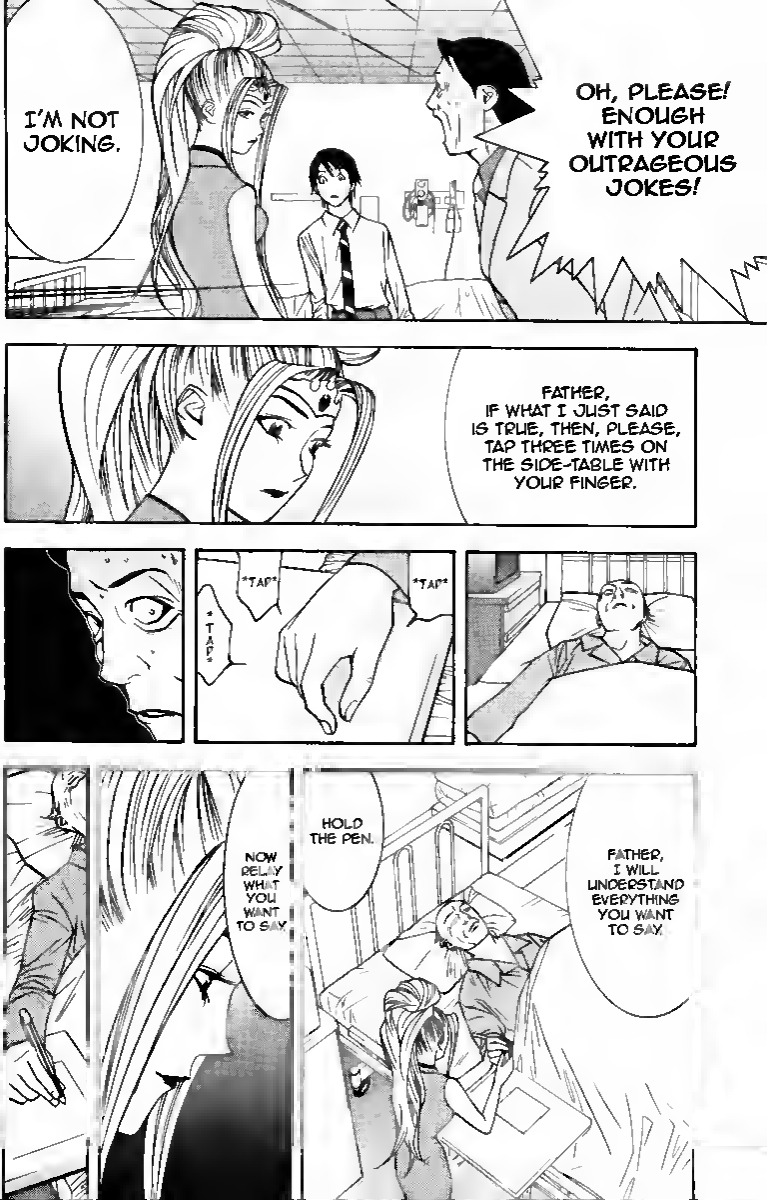

THE SHADY LOT USUALLY
CHOOSE THE MOMENT OF THEIR VICTIMS' EMOTIONAL INSTABILITY TO APPROACH THEM.
BY THE WAY WHY DID YOU ASK HIM TO COME VISIT THE FATHER TOMORROW TOGETHER?
AH, THAT?
BECAUSE I WANNA SEE IT FOR MYSELF
HOW THE FATHER WILL BE WRITING HIS MESSAGE
NEXT DAY
IS HE SLEEPING?
NO, TODAY HE IS AWAKE. HIS EYES ARE OPENED A TINIEST BIT.
FATHER
HOW ARE YOU FEELING?
"TWITCH"
HE WANTS TO DRAW SOMETHING!!!
HERE IS A PEN FATHER!

!!
!!
TAPTAPTAP
START RECORDING
RIGHT
TAPTAPTAP
TAPTAPTAP
.....
.....

TODAY'S DRAWING LOOKS LIKE THIS, HUH.
SO...
KYOUKO-SAN JUST GOT IN HER DETECTIVE MODE OVER THERE
WE'LL KNOW SOON ENOUGH
DON'T ASK ME
ANY IDEA WHAT THIS DRAWING COULD MEAN?
WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS DRAWING?!
WHAT IS IT?! WHAT IS IT?!
I GOT IT!
FOR REAL?!
EH?!
I'M NOT TELLING RIGHT NOW
SO PERSISTENT, HUH
THEN GIVE ME AT LEAST A HINT! A HINT PLEASE!

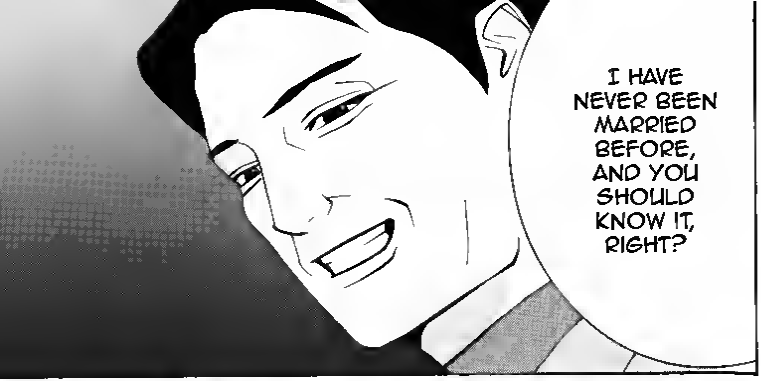
HINT NUMBER ONE: MAI-SAN'S FATHER CAN'T SEE WHAT HE'S DRAWING.
BUT IT'S THAT OBVIOUS? HE'S BEDRIDDEN AFTER ALL. HE CAN'T PROP HIS UPPER BODY UP TO LOOK AT THE DRAWING.
?
THEN I HAVE A QUESTION FOR YOU.
CAN YOU DRAW A ROSE WITH YOUR EYES CLOSED?
NO, I CAN'T.
EXACTLY.
STILL, HE TRIES TO RELAY SOME MESSAGE BY DRAWING IT EVEN WITH HIS BODY SO THOROUGHLY DISABLED.
HN... INDEED...
HINT NUMBER TWO.
MAI-SAN'S FATHER IS A FORMER SHIP'S DOCTOR.
?
?
SO WHAT OF IT?

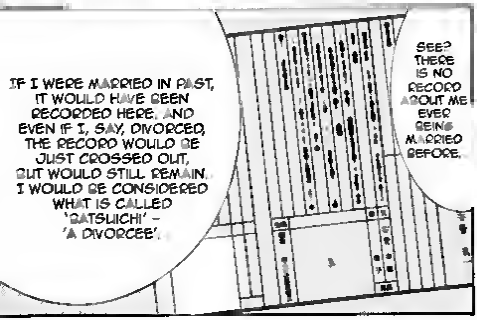
EH?!
YOU SUCCEEDED IN DECODING THE MESSAGE?!
NEXT DAY
LET'S READ IT, SHALL WE?
RUSTLE
SO WHAT ON EARTH FATHER TRIED TO WRITE?!
YES.
'HE' WHO...?
'HIM'...
THAT "HE" IS, OF COURSE...
HE TRIES TO DECEIVE YOU."
"BREAK UP WITH HIM.
!!
HIM.


I'M NOT JOKING.
OH, PLEASE! ENOUGH WITH YOUR OUTRAGEOUS JOKES!
FATHER, IF WHAT I JUST SAID IS TRUE, THEN, PLEASE, TAP THREE TIMES ON THE SIDE-TABLE WITH YOUR FINGER.
TAP
TAP
TAP
FATHER, I WILL UNDERSTAND EVERYTHING YOU WANT TO SAY.
HOLD THE PEN.
NOW RELAY WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY.

It was when I was a ship's doctor on the luxurious liner sailing around the globe.
Actually, I met him 23 years ago.
TAP
TAP
TAP
I have a very clear memory about him.
Because he, the then only 20 year old young man, married 55 year old woman.
TAPTAPTAPTAP
An odd couple, to say the least
But I figured right away why he married a woman 33 years older than himself.
She likely boarded the ship thinking of the world cruise as the last joy in her life. But she didn't last till its finish. She died when the liner stopped at the port of Istanbul.
That was when... I heard the words that left his mouth after her death, and I could not believe my ears...
Her name was Aoshima Yuuko, and she was the president of Aoshima Jewelry.
She suffered from terminal cancer, knowing about her decease, he approached her, seduced her, and even managed to register his marriage with her.
He wanted her fabulous wealth.

AND NOW
I CAN GO ON THE RACKET TILL I DIE!
HOW AWFUL!
YOU GOT INTO THE RELATIONSHIP WITH ME, AIMING ONLY FOR THE MONEY, DIDN'T YOU?!
YOU PRETENDED YOU CARED FOR MY FATHER
WHILE WISHING INSIDE FOR HIM TO DIE ALREADY!
IT'S ME WHO SHOULD SAY 'HOW AWFUL'... THAT EVEN YOU, MAI-CHAN, ARE ACCUSING ME...
YOU HAVE THE WRONG PERSON THOUGH.
EH..?
IF THIS IS ALL TRUE, THEN IT WOULD MEAN I WAS MARRIED 23 YEARS AGO, RIGHT? BUT YOU SEE...




IF I WERE MARRIED IN PAST, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN RECORDED HERE. AND EVEN IF I, SAY, DIVORCED, THE RECORD WOULD BE JUST CROSSED OUT, BUT WOULD STILL REMAIN. I WOULD BE CONSIDERED WHAT IS CALLED 'BATSUICHI' – 'A DIVORCEE'.
SEE? THERE IS NO RECORD ABOUT ME EVER BEING MARRIED BEFORE.

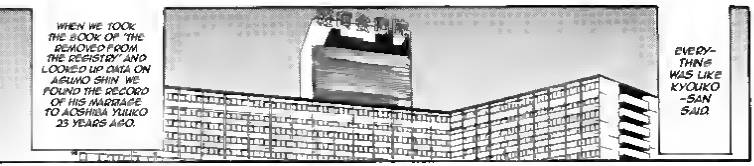
.....
EVERYTHING THAT WAS SAID EARLIER WAS ABOUT SOME OTHER PERSON AND HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH ME.
BUT, AS YOU SEE, THERE ARE NO RECORDS ON ME ABOUT MARRIAGES WHATSOEVER! NONE AT ALL! WHICH MEANS...

A RECORD OF PREVIOUS MARRIAGES IN THE FAMILY REGISTER IS ONLY CROSSED OUT EVEN IN THE CASE OF A DIVORCE. BUT YOU CAN'T GET RID OF IT.
HUH?
THINK YOU CAN GET OFF THE HOOK WITH THIS EXCUSE?
HEEH.
MISTAKING HIM FOR SOMEONE ELSE, OF ALL THINGS... HOW ARE YOU GOING TO FIND YOUR WAY OUT OF THIS MESS?
OUCH! KYOUKO-SAN... WHAT A FAILURE...

T/N: FOR THOSE DIVORCED ONCE THERE IS A SPECIAL WORD IN JAPANESE, STEMMING FROM THE FACT THAT THE RECORD ABOUT A MARRIAGE GETS CROSSED OUT WHEN A PERSON DIVORCES - 'BATSUICHI', WHICH LITERALLY MEANS 'CROSSED OUT ONCE'.

THE FACT OF THE FIRST MARRIAGE CAN BE GOTTEN RID OF.
...WHAT AN UNINVENTIVE LIE!
LATELY IT'S BEEN A RISE IN THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE TRYING TO HIDE USING THIS PARTICULAR LOOPHOLE
IT'S IN THE DOMICILE FAMILY REGISTER, AFTER ALL ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS MOVE TO SOME OTHER TOWN CITY OR VILLAGE TO LIVE AND THE PREVIOUS RECORDS OF MARRIAGES AND DIVORCES WILL DISAPPEAR JUST LIKE THAT~
EASILY AT THAT TOO
EEEH?! IS THIS TRUE?!
IT'S ALL SAVED IN THE SHAPE OF THE LIST OF 'THE REMOVED FROM THE FAMILY REGISTER' BY THE PUBLIC OFFICE
HOWEVER, YOUR TRANSFERING OF RESIDENCE DOESN'T MAKE THE DATA ON YOU FROM THE PREVIOUS FAMILY REGISTER DISAPPEAR, YOU SEE
AND IF YOU STILL WANT TO PLAY INNOCENT, THEN, I SAY, WE ALL GO AND CHECK 'THE REMOVED FROM THE REGISTRY' BOOK TOGETHER, RIGHT NOW
BUT IF WE REQUEST A COPY OF YOUR DATA FROM 'THE REMOVED FROM THE REGISTER' BOOK IT WILL ALL BE THERE IN VEEEEERY CLEAR BLACK AND WHITE
IN OTHER WORDS, YOU MADE THE RECORD OF YOUR MARRIAGE SEEMINGLY DISAPPEAR BY MOVING TO LIVE HERE

AND I HAVE NO DOUBT WE WILL SEE THE NAME "AOSHIBA YUUKO" THERE RIGHT AWAY.


WHEN WE TOOK THE BOOK OF "THE REMOVED FROM THE REGISTRY" AND LOOKED UP OMIA ON AGUNO SHIN WE FOUND THE RECORD OF HIS MARRIAGE TO AOSHIBA YUUKO 23 YEARS AGO.
EVERY-THING WAS LIKE KYOUKO -SAN SAID.

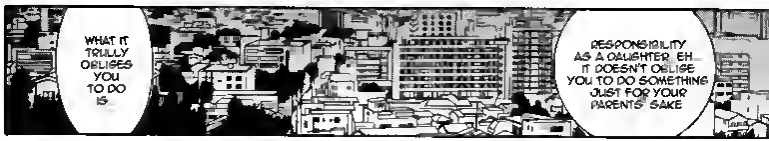
HE WAS A HARDENED CRIMINAL, WHOSE AIM WAS GETTING RICH WOMEN'S FORTUNE THROUGH ARRANGING A CAMOUFLAGING MARRIAGE WITH THEM.
AND HIS POSITION OF THE HEAD OF A COMPANY WAS ALSO A LIE
ALL THREE DIED
MOREOVER THERE WERE THREE MORE RECORDS OF HIS MARRIAGES TO THREE OTHER WOMEN

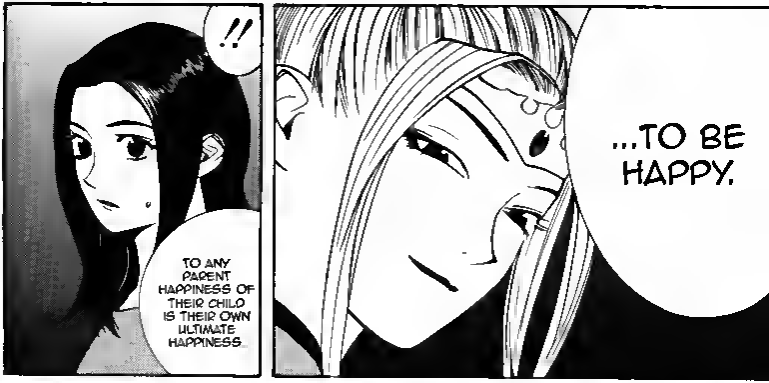
IS THIS MESSAGE REALLY THAT LONG?
JUST FROM THIS DRAW-ING
I'M REALLY IMPRESSED BY HOW KYOUKO-SAN MANAGED TO UNRAVEL ALL THIS

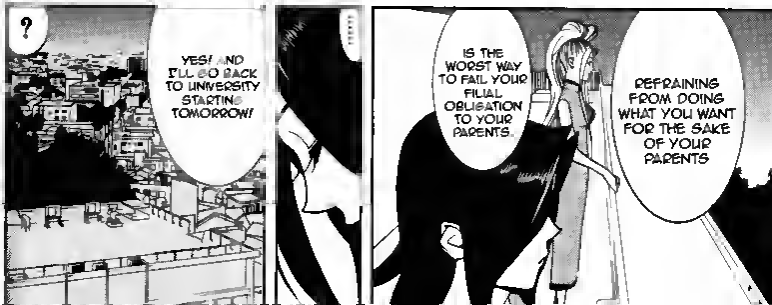
?
EH? THE SYSTEM OF DOTS AND DASHES USED FOR COMMUNICATION?
MORSE CODE. THE WAY OF COMMUNICATION ON SEA THAT USED TO BE PRIMARY UNTIL THE GROWTH OF THE WIRELESS TECHNOLOGY.
YEAH.
IT'S MORSE CODE.
NO WONDER HE COULD USE MORSE CODE
MAI-SAN'S FATHER WAS A SHIP'S DOCTOR FOR A LONG TIME, AFTER ALL.
NOPE
TILL YESTERDAY KYOUKO-SAN DIDN'T KNOW MORSE CODE.
EH?!
I SEE... WE GOT TOTALLY CONFUSED BECAUSE OF THE PAPER THAT WAS ACTUALLY NOT EVEN NEEDED...
BUT IN THE END WE WERE SAVED, SINCE LUCKILY KYOUKO-SAN HAPPENED TO KNOW MORSE CODE APPARENTLY.
THIS ISN'T A DRAWING, JUST MARKS THAT WERE LEFT WHEN THE FATHER TAPPED HIS MESSAGE WITH THE PEN.
AND HE DIDN'T REALLY NEED PAPER FOR THAT, YOU SEE.
YOU GOT IT
AH?!
THEN THIS IS NOT A...?!

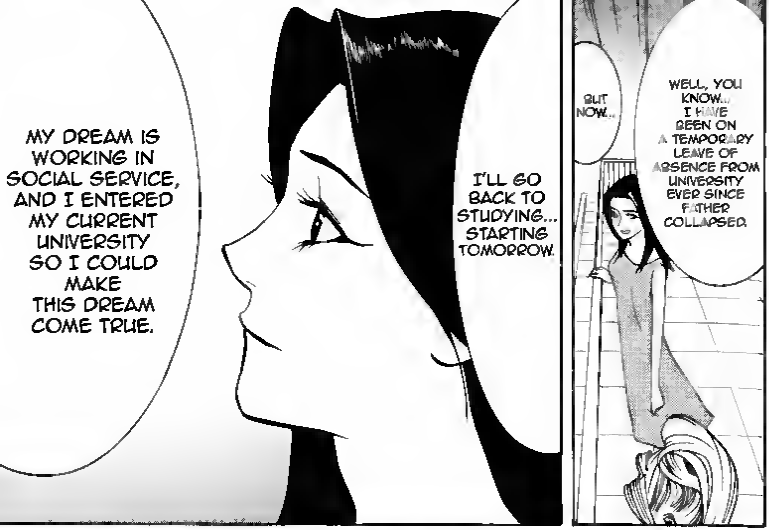
IN JUST ONE DAY.
SHE MEMORIZED IT SPECIFICALLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF DECODING THE MESSAGE THE FATHER TAPPED.
.....
BUT SHE DID IT, DESPITE ALL ODDS SHE CAN DRAW ABSOLUTELY AMAZING POWERS WHEN IT COMES TO HELPING PEOPLE
NOPE. I'M TOLD IT TAKES A WEEK FOR A PERSON WITH GOOD MEMORY TO MEMORIZE IT
BUT THERE'S NO WAY MORSE CODE IS EASY TO MEMORIZE, IS THERE?!
!!
WENT TO THE ROOF TO COMFORT MAI-SAN
WHERE IS KYOUKO -SAN NOW?
WHY WERE YOU IN SUCH A HURRY TO GET MARRIED?
DEEP INSIDE, I WANTED SOMEBODY TO PUT A STOP TO IT.
MAYBE THAT WAS WHY I CAME TO YOU, KYOUKO -SAN.
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, I REALIZE THAT I ALWAYS FELT A KIND OF DISCOMFORT BEING IN HIS COMPANY.
STRANGELY ENOUGH, I DO NOT FEEL DEPRESSED.
SAD?
NO...

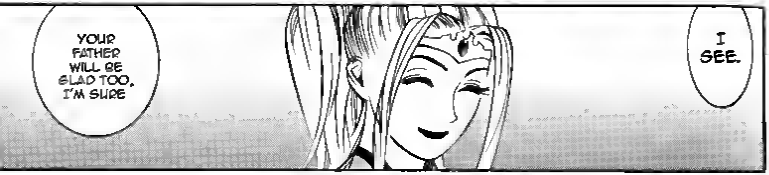
LETTING FATHER SEE HIS ONLY DAUGHTER IN THE WEDDING GOWN WHILE HE'S STILL ALIVE...
BECAUSE I FELT IT WAS MY RESPONSIBILITY AS A GOOD DAUGHTER, I THINK.


WHAT IT TRULLY OBLIGES YOU TO DO IS...
RESPONSIBILITY AS A DAUGHTER, EH... IT DOESN'T OBLIGE YOU TO DO SOMETHING JUST FOR YOUR PARENTS' SAKE


!!
TO ANY PARENT HAPPINESS OF THEIR CHILD IS THEIR OWN ULTIMATE HAPPINESS.
...TO BE HAPPY.


?
YES! AND I'LL GO BACK TO UNIVERSITY STARTING TOMORROW!
IS THE WORST WAY TO FAIL YOUR FILIAL OBLIGATION TO YOUR PARENTS.
REFRAINING FROM DOING WHAT YOU WANT FOR THE SAKE OF YOUR PARENTS


MY DREAM IS WORKING IN SOCIAL SERVICE, AND I ENTERED MY CURRENT UNIVERSITY SO I COULD MAKE THIS DREAM COME TRUE.
I'LL GO BACK TO STUDYING... STARTING TOMORROW.
BUT NOW...
WELL, YOU KNOW... I HAVE BEEN ON A TEMPORARY LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM UNIVERSITY EVER SINCE FATHER COLLAPSED.


YOUR FATHER WILL BE GLAD TOO, I'M SURE
I SEE.

I'LL TELL HER THAT I AM THE HAPPIEST MAN IN THE WHOLE WORLD.
AND.
Hello? Mom?
YES... I'LL CALL MY MOTHER. IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE I LAST TALKED TO HER ON THE PHONE...
COME TO THINK OF IT, I... I FELT OBLIGED TO GET A JOB FOR MY PARENTS' SAKE... THAT'S THE ONLY THING I THOUGHT OF...
DOING SOMETHING NOT FOR PARENTS' SAKE... BUT FOR THE SAKE OF YOUR OWN HAPPINESS, BECAUSE YOUR HAPPINESS WILL MAKE THEM HAPPY, HUH...
LIKE THIS, HUH...

＊出席番号6番＊